

- Cassinia**, Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, No. XVIII, 1914, pp. 1-80, pls. I-V. (Issued March [= April 17], 1915.)
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- Emu**, The, XIV, Part 3, January, 1915.
- Forest and Stream**, LXXXIV, Nos. 3 and 4, March-April, 1915.
- Oölogist**, The, XXXII, Nos. 3, 4, March and April, 1915.
- Oregon Sportsman**, The, III, No. 2, February, 1915.
- Ottawa Naturalist**, The, XXVIII, Nos. 11, 12, February and March, 1915.
- Proceedings** Cal. Acad. Sci., IV, Nos. 4-5; V, Nos. 1-2, March 14 and 26, 1915.
- Proceedings** National Acad. Sci., I, No. 3, March, 1915.
- Revue** Francaise d'Ornithologie, VI, Nos. 64-65, 66-67, 68. September, November and December, 1914; VII, Nos. 69, 70, January and February, 1915.
- Revista** Italiana di Ornitologia, III, No. 3-4, July-December, 1914.
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- Scottish** Naturalist, The, Nos. 39, 40, March and April, 1915.
- Verhandlungen** der Ornith. Gesell. in Bayern. XII, Heft. 2, February 8, 1915.
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NOTES AND NEWS.

HARRY KIRKLAND POMEROY, an associate member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died of Typhoid Fever in Kalamazoo, Mich., on January 27, 1915.

Mr. Pomeroy was born in Lockport, New York, April 3, 1865, and moved to Kalamazoo, Mich., in 1872. His favorite study was Ornithology and his collection of birds' nests and eggs is one of the best in the State.

The many friends who enjoyed the privilege of Mr. Pomeroy's acquaintance will learn with deep regret of his untimely death. His kindly considerate nature and earnest helpfulness to his friends were among the many sterling characteristics that helped to endear him and make him beloved by them all.

Mr. Pomeroy was an active member of the Cooper Ornithological Club and deeply interested in western ornithology and oölogy. His excellent collection is an enduring monument to his industrious habits and studies during the leisure hours snatched from a busy outdoor life.—E. ARNOLD.

WE learn with great regret of the death of Lord Brabourne, who was killed in action on March 13, 1915, in the twenty-ninth year of his age. He had returned only recently from South America where he was collecting material for the work on 'The Birds of South America' which he was writing in conjunction with Mr. Charles Chubb and of which only one part had appeared. Lord Brabourne was an officer of the Grenadier Guards.

THE question of the limits of genera bids fair to be the most serious problem in zoölogical nomenclature. In the recent 'List of British Birds' there are 171 species and 151 generic groups which are to be found also in the A. O. U. Check-List. The two committees working under the International Code have, after making allowance for several admitted errors or arbitrary violations of rules, arrived at the same names for all but four of the species, while the latest British list differs from that of Dr. Hartert and his associates in only 3 specific cases. When three independent committees approach so close to uniformity it would seem that the International Code had solved the problems of nomenclatural discrepancy.

In the case of the 151 genera, however, we find 49 cases where the names employed are different. After making allowance as above we find that only 7 of this number are due to questions of nomenclature, i. e. to the still unsettled point as to how much difference in spelling constitutes a different word and to the recognition of certain works in systematic nomenclature.

The other 42 cases are due to difference of opinion as to the limitation of genera. One committee, for instance, considers that the Mallard, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, each represents a distinct genus and consequently calls them *Anas brachyrhynchos*, *Querquedula discors* and *Nettion carolinense*. Another considers that they all belong to one genus and quotes them as, *Anas brachyrhynchos*, *Anas discors* and *Anas carolinensis*. The third regards the Teal as congeneric but considers that the Mallard represents a distinct genus and we have, *Anas brachyrhynchos*, *Querquedula discors* and *Querquedula carolinensis*. It will be noticed that there is here just as much confusion and difference of opinion as could possibly be occasioned by the law of priority, the 'first species' rule of type fixation, or any of the other principles of nomenclature against which such protests have been directed; and yet this is due purely to a question of ornithology with which the rules of nomenclature and the "name jugglers" have nothing whatever to do.

Now if the name of a bird is to be used as a medium to exploit personal opinions as to the phylogeny and relationship of species we had better devise some other means of tagging a species so that some one else will know what we are talking about.

If on the other hand the name of the bird is to constitute such a 'tag' then we should by some international and arbitrary agreement decide these disputed cases so that we may have the same uniformity *ornithologically* that we seem to have at last attained *nomenclaturally*.

The great majority of ornithologists are pretty well agreed upon the great

majority of genera and there will not be so very many to be settled arbitrarily, but such arbitrary action, if we are to have a permanent and universal system of names, seems to be inevitable. Those who wish to make further subdivisions may still use the suppressed names as subgenera in any discussion or systematic monograph.

Another phase of the same question is the increasing tendency to recognize finer and finer generic divisions, a matter which has been discussed by the writer (*Jour. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila.* XV, p. 313) and by the British Ornithologists' Club at a recent meeting (*Bull. B. O. C.*, No. CCIV, p. 68 et seq.). In some groups we have already reached the stage where a large number of genera contain but a single species each. The generic name has thus become of exactly the same significance as the specific name and is superfluous. The ultimate outcome of this sort of thing will be a nomenclature wherein each species will have a name but no clue whatever to its relationship will be found in this name.

Linnæus' idea was that the 63 genera under which he arranged all the birds known to him, represented 63 types of bird structure and when the generic name was mentioned the general character of the bird was immediately known, while the specific name indicated a form of that type of bird.

Of course we cannot go back to Linnæus or anywhere near to him, but we *must*, if a name is to be maintained *as a name*, check the further subdivision of genera. Moreover why is the discovery of a slight structural difference of such paramount importance that we should overturn our names to advertise it? Is it not just as important to emphasize relationship as divergence? Indeed we are suffering at the present time in systematic ornithology for the need of some way to indicate relationship. We shall soon be forced to erect a lot of subfamilies to indicate relationships formerly denoted by generic names which have now been degraded until they are perilously close to species.

It should be born in mind that a genus is not a definite thing in the sense that a species is; it is simply a group for convenience, sometimes it is sharply defined, more often it is not. This fact is well shown in the virtual agreement of the committees referred to above as to the number of species before them and their wide differences of opinion as to the number of genera.

It is difficult to provide a means for bringing about the desired uniformity in the limits and number of generic groups, but the necessity for such action should be strongly emphasized and widely proclaimed.

THE thirty-third stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held in San Francisco, May 17-20, 1915. This was the first regular meeting of the Union to be held outside of the eastern cities of New York, Cambridge, Washington and Philadelphia and much credit is due to the energy and generous hospitality of the California members, which were responsible not only for the notable success of the meeting, but for its being held so far away from what might be called the 'type locality' of the A. O. U.

The eastern members who formed the regular A. O. U. excursion party comprised Messrs. John H. Sage, J. H. Fleming, and Samuel Wright; Drs. T. S. Palmer and Witmer Stone and Miss May T. Cooke. Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Stone and Miss Haskell were also in the party. At Chicago, Mr. W. H. Osgood entertained the party at dinner. A stop of two days was made at the Grand Cañon, Arizona, and a combined list of the birds observed in the forest around the rim of the Cañon and during the descent to the bottom, was made by the members which will appear in a subsequent number of 'The Auk.'

At Los Angeles Dr. A. K. Fisher and Dr. and Mrs. J. Dwight, Jr., who had gone on ahead, joined the party, and a number of other eastern members and their families went direct to San Francisco by other routes: these included Dr. and Mrs. C. Hart Merriam, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Widmann, Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Murphy, John T. Nichols, T. Gilbert Pearson, Dr. W. J. Holland and Mr. and Mrs. Chas. A. Schoffner.

The members who stopped over at Los Angeles were most cordially entertained by the southern division of the Cooper Ornithological Club. A reception was tendered them at the Museum of Science and Arts, where Messrs. Daggett and Swarth exhibited the collections, while Mr. and Mrs. J. Eugene Law personally conducted the trips to Catalina Island and Mt. Lowe. Messrs. A. B. Howell, W. Lee Chambers, A. E. Colburn, E. J. Brown, and others did all in their power to make the visit enjoyable.

At San Francisco the business session was held at the California Academy of Sciences and, at various times during the stay of the eastern members, Dr. Evermann and Mr. Loomis acted as hosts to those who desired to consult the valuable collections of the Academy, especially the series of Tubinares.

The Museum of Vertebrate Zoölogy of the University of California was also a center of interest to the visitors, and Drs. Joseph Grinnell and H. C. Bryant, Messrs. Tracy Storer, W. P. Taylor and others devoted much time to explaining and displaying the wonderfully complete west coast collections which have been brought together at the Museum.

The public sessions of the Union were held in halls within the grounds of the Panama Pacific International Exposition and were well attended. President Fisher, Vice-President Stone and Mr. Joseph Mailliard, President of the northern division of the Cooper Ornithological Club, presided at the sessions.

The motion pictures of Grebes, Gulls, Murres and Golden Eagles exhibited by Mr. W. L. Finley were the most notable feature of an interesting program. The annual dinner of the Union and the luncheons, one of which was held at a Chinese restaurant, within the grounds, were enjoyable affairs and thanks to the efficient management of Mr. Joseph Mailliard and his committee of arrangements, the meeting will be remembered by those in attendance as one of the most successful in the history of the Union.

Rainy weather prevented the trip to Mt. Tamalpais on the last day of

the meeting and extremely rough water on the next day necessitated the cancelling of the Farallon trip. Dr. Evermann, however, arranged to have the Albatross cruise around the bay and a large party of A. O. U. members and friends enjoyed the trip, while others visited Mt. Tamalpais and the Muir woods. The eastern members then scattered to visit the Exposition and various parts of California, many of them being entertained by Dr. and Mrs. C. Hart Merriam at their summer home at Lagunitas.

The regular detailed account of the meeting, which could not be prepared in time for this issue, will appear in the October 'Auk.'

At the business session the proposed changes in the By-Laws whereby Members will hereafter share with Fellows the business of the Union and the election of Officers, Members, and Associates, were finally adopted.

The present officers were re-elected and Philadelphia was selected as the place of meeting in 1916, the time being left to the local committee. It was the expressed wish of all the eastern members in attendance that a large delegation from 'the coast' might be present on this occasion so that an opportunity might be provided for repaying, in part at least, the generous hospitality of California and the Cooper Ornithological Club.